What is claimed is:

1. A discoloration inhibitor for metals, comprising: a fiber having a crosslinking structure and containing carboxyl groups bound thereto, at least part of said carboxyl groups being present as a salt of an alkali metal, an alkali earth metal or ammonia; and fine particles of a metal and/or a metal compound substantially insoluble in water and reactive with a sulfur-containing compound dispersed in said fiber.

2. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 1 wherein 60 mole % or more of said carboxyl groups are neutralized with the salt of an alkali metal, an alkali earth metal or ammonia.

3. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 1, wherein said metal and/or metal compound substantially insoluble in water is at least one metal or a compound of a metal selected from the group consisting of Ag, Cu, Zn, Mn, and Fe.

4. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 1, wherein the content of said metal and/or metal compound

substantially insoluble in water in said fiber is 0.1 mass % or more.

5. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 1, wherein said fiber has a crosslinked acrylic fiber as the basic skeleton, at least part of the functional groups of said fiber molecule being hydrolyzed, and at least part of the hydrolyzed functional groups being present as a carboxylate salt.

6. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 5 wherein 60 mole % or more of said carboxyl groups are neutralized with the salt of an alkali metal, an alkali earth metal or ammonia.

7. The discoloration inhibitor according to claim 1, wherein the discoloration inhibitor is in the shape of a wad of staple fiber or a nonwoven, woven, or knitted fabric.